

LIVING ORTHODOXY



SAINT DAVID, ENLIGHTENER OF WALES
LIFE & LITURGICAL SERVICE

Also in this issue...

The Life of St. Anthony the Great conclusion
The Holy Forty Martyrs of Sebaste

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LIVING ORTHODOXY

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Metropolitan of New York & Eastern America
Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia

EPISTLE OF THE COUNCIL OF BISHOPS OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH ABROAD

The Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad greets its faithful members in these joyous days with the Paschal salutation: **Christ is Risen!**

In many ways, the future of our Church depends on each of its members. The faithful of the Church must understand that the Christian way of life is yet another embodiment of the sermon of the Gospel. The entire way of the Church is the way of unity in Christ. As an example of such unity, the past of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad is with us to this day, and since it is a holy legacy, we desire to remain faithful to it. We bear in mind the admonitions of the holy Patriarch St. Tikhon and all our first hierarchs — Metropolitans Anthony, Anastasy, Philaret, and Vitaly — and we stand firm in that immaculate Orthodox confession, to which the entire Orthodox Church has held throughout the years. “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” (Hebrews 13:8).

In the manner of our Lord, we have striven to unite everyone and offered an invitation to members of the divided ROCA to begin a dialogue, but unfortunately our voice has not been heard by many to this day. Nevertheless, we do not cease to hope that the flock which finds itself in disunity will respond one day to our call to gather our Church together.

In these sorrowful days, the actions of many of those who call themselves Orthodox attest to their loss of the spirit of Christ. Having conducted and justified praying together with heretics and entering into arrangements with the mighty of this world for the sake of their material well-being, they have lost the very ability to distinguish good and evil. Still, we call upon our flock not to become bitter, and to continue to entreat God to turn the hearts of those who recently were our brothers but who are now our persecutors.

In light of the new wave of harassment which Christians are experiencing from the governments of the lands in which they find themselves (we are experiencing this in Argentina), as well as from the Moscow

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Patriarchate, we call upon all of you, dear fathers, brothers and sisters to stand firm in the Truth. Neither tribulation, nor distress, nor persecution, nor famine, nor nakedness, nor peril, nor sword will keep you from Christ's love! (Romans 8:35) God will give those who love Him the strength to overcome all tribulations!

May the words of the Victor over this world console us in these days and for all time: “Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” (Luke 12:32)

+Metropolitan Agafangel; +Archbishop Andronik;
+ Archbishop Sofroniy; + Archbishop Ioann;
+Bishop Georgiy; +Bishop Afanasy; +Bishop Gregory;
+Bishop Kirill; +Bishop Dionisiy
Odessa, 2010

THE HOLY HIERARCH DAVID, ARCHBISHOP OF MENEVIA, ENLIGHTENER OF WALES

WHOSE MEMORY THE CHURCH COMMEMORATES ON THE 1ST DAY OF MARCH

St. David (Dewi, in Welsh) was born about 446 at Mynyw (Menevia), later named St. David's after him, in the middle or late 5th century. His mother was the lady Nôn (daughter of Gynyr of Caergawch), who had entered the convent at Ty Gwyn near Whitesands Bay. However, her beauty brought her to the attention of Sandde, son of Ceredig, who was the son of Cunedda, the great conqueror of northern Wales. Traveling nearby, Sandde, prince of the adjoining kingdom of Ceredigion, made advances which were, of course vehemently rejected. However, the royal lord would not take no for an answer and forced his passions upon the unfortunate Nôn.

St. David was eventually born in the middle of a violent storm at Caerfai, on the coast just south of Mynyw, where a ruined chapel still marks the spot. He was brought up by his mother in Henfeynyw (Vetus Rubus) near Aberærnon and was baptized, at a young age, by his mother's cousin, St. Eilfw.

He was educated under Iltyt at Caerworgon and, upon attaining manhood, was soon ordained a priest. He studied the Scriptures for some ten years with the wise St. Paulinus (10 Oct.), himself a disciple of St. Germanus of Auxerre (31 July). He had such respect for his spiritual father and followed his precepts with such great humility that, for six years, he never dared to look directly at him, whose face was so constantly bathed in tears from the contemplation of God's wonders that it made him blind. St. David who, through this humble submission, had gained the Lord's favor, healed his master of this blindness by tracing the sign of the Cross on his eyes. Some time later, having been warned by an angel, St. Paulinus let him go to sow the seed of the truth in other places.

St. David first retired for prayer and study to the Vale of Ewias, where he raised a chapel and a cell on the site now occupied by Llanthony Abbey. The river Honddu furnished him with drink, the mountain pastures with meadow-leek for food. Advised by an angel, he moved from under the shadow of the Black Mountains to the vale of Rhos, there to found a monastery at Mynyw, his birthplace. Thirty years earlier, St. Patrick (7 March) had wanted to settle there, but an angel had appeared to him, telling him that another man of God would come and live there, and commanding him to go and preach the Gospel in Ireland.

St. David built a monastery on the boggy land which forms nearly the lowest point on that basin-shaped glen. On or near its site stands the present Cathedral of St. David. He practiced the same rigorous austerities as before. Water was his only drink, and he rigorously abstained from animal food. He devoted himself wholly to prayer, study, and the training of his disciples.

An Irish chieftain, Bywa, who lived nearby, was not in the least pleased at this invasion by monks. He set out in a rage to drive out the intruding



monks. But even before having arrived at the place, he and his men of arms were struck down with a high fever, and his cattle suddenly perished. Realizing that the power of God was with the monks, Bywa threw himself at the saint's feet to beg his forgiveness, and promised to make him a gift of the land. But no sooner had Bywa been healed and his cattle restored to life at the saint's prayers, than his wife, animated by a tenacious hatred for the monks, sent her servants to inveigle them into sin by bathing naked in the River Alun. The monks were not impressed.

Encouraging his disciples to resist temptation by reminding them of the struggles which the Children of Israel had endured before entering into the Promised Land, David finished: "If Christ is for us,

who can be against us?" In fact, the new Herodias went mad the next day and Bywa perished, attacked by enemies who burned down his fortress.

St. David's foundation was then able to grow in peace. The brethren spent a great part of the day in heavy and arduous labor in the fields, never using draft animals to work the land, in order, through physical fatigue, to subdue their rebellious spirit which had been weakened by the passions. While working, they kept constant silence, praying within themselves or reciting the Psalter. Once having returned to the monastery in an orderly manner, they spent the rest of the day in reading, prayer, and the copying of manuscripts. At the hour of Vespers, as soon as the bell had sounded, they all stopped what they were doing at once to gather in the church and raise to God, in harmonious choir, their hymns of thanksgiving for the day past. Then they remained kneeling till the stars appeared, and only then did they repair to the refectory for a simple meal of bread, salt and roots in water, mixed with a little milk. Then they returned to the church for three hours of prayer, and then went to give some time to sleep. They rose at cockcrow to consecrate the first of the day to hymns and prayers, then went to their work in silence.

They held all things in common, and if anyone dared to call any object his own he was subject to a severe penance. Obedient to their spiritual father as to God Himself, they opened up all their thoughts to him and, thus preserved by his prayers, they lived in peace and without cares.

When someone asked to be received into the monastery, he had to wait at the door for ten days, harshly tested by difficult tasks and all sorts of insults. If he showed patience and humility, he was then admitted among the brethren and put under the direction of an elder who taught him the monastic customs and the way of purification of the soul.

Like many other abbots of the time, St. David was consecrated to the episcopate, perhaps in the course of a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Upon his return to Wales, he was summoned (with great reluctance) to the great Council of Llandewi-Brefi which Dubricius, Archbishop of Cæleon, had convoked against the Pelagian heresy. The synod was

composed of bishops, abbots, and religious of different orders, together with princes and laymen. Giraldus says, "When many discourses had been delivered in public, but were ineffectual to reclaim the Pelagians from their error, at length St. Paulinus, a bishop with whom St. David had studied in his youth, very earnestly entreated that the holy, discreet, and eloquent man might be sent for. Messengers were therefore dispatched to request his attendance. But their importunity availed little with the holy man, who was so fully and intently given up to contemplation that urgent necessity alone could induce him to pay any regard to temporal or secular concerns. At last two holy men, Daniel and Dubricius, persuaded him to come. After his arrival, such was the grace and eloquence with which he spoke that he silenced the opponents, and they were utterly vanquished. Subsequently, despite his great resistance, St. David was elected primate of the Cambrian Church." Dubricius retired to the Isle of Bardsey.

A beautiful, and perhaps true, legend relates that while St. David spoke, a snow white dove descended from heaven and sat upon his shoulders, and the earth on which he stood raised itself under him till it became a hill, whence his voice was heard like a trumpet, understood by all, both near and far off. On the top of this hill a church was afterwards built, and remains to this day.

St. David obtained from the council authorization to transfer the episcopal seat to his monastery at Mynyw (Menevia), which then became a flourishing city, taking his name. Allying the pastoral charge with his monastic duties without concession, he set himself to purge the Lord's sheepfold of the last traces of heresy. He summoned a second council, called "of Victoria", at Câenféom-on-Usk (Monmouthshire) to confirm the Synod of Llandewi-Brefi, and to record the rules of ecclesiastical discipline which remained for many centuries the basis of the organization of the Church in Great Britain. This was enlarged and developed through the example of his sanctity and the influence of his monastic foundations, which produced a large number of saints.

Giraldus says: "In his times, in Cambria, the Church of God flourished exceedingly, and ripened

with much fruit every day. Monasteries were built everywhere; many congregations of the faithful of various orders were collected to celebrate with fervent devotion the Sacrifice of Christ. But to all of them St. David, as if placed on a lofty eminence, was a mirror and pattern of life. He informed them by words, and he instructed them by example. As a preacher he was most powerful through his eloquence, but more so in his works. He was a doctrine to his hearers, a guide to the religious, a light to the poor, a support to the orphans, a protection to widows, a father to the fatherless, a rule to monks, and a path to seculars, being made all things to men that he might bring all to God.”

After many years of labor for the upbuilding of the Church, he peacefully gave his soul into the

hands of Christ, Who appeared to him surrounded by a multitude of angels, saying with joy and impatience, “Take me with you!” Geoffrey of Monmouth says that he died in his monastery at Mynyw, where he was honorably buried by order of Maelgwn Gwynedd. As much uncertainty surrounds the date of his death as that of his birth — perhaps as early as 544AD, perhaps as late as 589AD, at an advanced age (computed by Abp. Usher to be 82).

A noble English matron, Elswida, in the reign of Edgar, transferred his relics, probably in 964, from St. David’s to Glastonbury. His plain but empty shrine stands now in the choir of St. David’s Cathedral to the north of Edward Tudor’s altar tomb.

Compiled from various sources, including: Baring-Gould, *Lives of the Saints*, vol. III (March); Edinburgh: John Grant, 1914; the *Synaxarion* (English), vol. IV (March-April); Annunciation Convent, Ormylia, Greece; 2003; and a typescript *Biography* of unknown provenance by David Nash Ford.

THE 1ST DAY OF THE MONTH OF MARCH COMMEMORATION OF OUR FATHER AMONG THE SAINTS DAVID, BISHOP AT MENEVIA, ENLIGHTENER OF WALES

AT VESPERS

On “Lord, I have cried...”, these stichera, in Tone VIII Spec. Mel.: “O all-glorious wonder...” —

O all-glorious wonder! From childhood thou didst adorn thy life with virtue, and having been made a priest of Christ wast truly shown to be a luminary for His flock. Wherefore, having vanquished the demons by thy tireless spiritual warfare, in soul thou hast ascended on high, where thou beholdest thy Lord and Master face to face in the splendor of His glory.

O all-glorious wonder, that human flesh could be so mortified! For, following the ascetics of the desert, thou didst lay waste thy body, resisting all the temptations of the flesh and putting away from thee all carnal thoughts, O David blessed of God; wherefore, arrayed in garments of purity as for a wedding feast, thou hast entered, rejoicing, into the joy of thy Lord.

O all-glorious wonder, the grace of God which doth sanctify and deify filled thy humble soul,

O David, and thou didst preach with eloquence against the accursed Pelagius, refuting his vile heresy, watchfully fending off the faithful from its pernicious harm, and leading them in gladness into the splendid courts of Christ, to the mansions of the righteous.

Glory..., of the holy hierarch, idiomelon, in Tone III —

Come, O ye assembly of the faithful, and with reverent voices let us praise the holy hierarch David, who as a good shepherd guided his flock to the Faith with the word of Truth, by his virtues teaching them to tread the straight and narrow path which leadeth to paradise. Truly, for his obedience the Almighty hath bestowed upon him manifold spiritual gifts, which he freely imparteth to those who bless his holy memory, entreating Christ to have pity on us and grant us remission of sins.

Now & ever...: Theotokion, or this stavrotheotokion —

Beholding Thee hanging dead upon the Tree,

O Christ, Thy pure Mother, who knew not wedlock, said, lamenting maternally: "How hath the iniquitous and ungrateful assembly of the Jews rewarded Thee, having enjoyed Thy many and great gifts, O my Son? I hymn Thy divine condescension!"

Troparion of the saint, in Tone III—

Let the Christians of Wales join in gladsome chorus, uplifting their voices in joyous jubilation, as we celebrate the feast of the wondrous David, their holy father and enlightener, who now dwelleth with the saints on high, and doth ever earnestly intercede for us sinners.

AT MATINS

Canon of the saint, with 4 troparia, the acrostic whereof is "David droppeth miracles like holy dew", in Tone VI—

ODE I

Irmos: With an upraised arm Christ drowned the chariots of Pharaoh and his power, and saved Israel, who sent up the hymn: Let us sing unto our wondrous God!

Deign Thou to fill my mouth with eloquence, O Christ, that I may praise the wondrous David, who enjoineth us, saying: Let us sing unto our wondrous God!

A youth comely and full of divine grace, thou didst undertake to study well the Scriptures, O holy David, that thou mightest chant unto our wondrous God.

Verily did thy fellows behold a dove with beak of gold playing at thy holy lips, O glorious David, teaching thee to chant the praises of our wondrous God.

Theotokion: In voices of exultation let us hymn the all-pure and immaculate Theotokos, that, saved by her supplications, we may sing unto our wondrous God.

ODE III

Irmos: All the heavens, which were established by Thee, O Word and Power of God, confess Thine ineffable glory and the creation of Thine all-accomplishing hands; for there is none holy save Thee, O Lord.

Despising the vanity of the world, O sacred one, thou didst flee to the venerable Paulinus, great among ascetics, and he taught thee to cry out to the Master of all: There is none holy save Thee, O Lord!

Destroying his bodily eyes by constant weeping, the elder Paulinus fell blind; but, full of the power of the Word of God, the holy David healed him, crying out: There is none holy save Thee, O Lord!

Replete with the grace of God, David most great set it as his holy task to build many churches and to establish many monasteries, wherein the pious might chant: There is none holy save Thee, O Lord!

Theotokion: O the heavenly glory of thine ineffable birthgiving, O holy Virgin and Mother. For in manner beyond the comprehension of man thou gavest birth to thine own Creator, the Word and Power of God.

Sessional hymn, in Tone I: Spec. Mel.: "When the stone had been sealed..."—

Withdrawing from the tumults of the world, O holy David, thou didst willingly bend thy neck beneath the yoke of Christ, submitting in obedience to the holy Paulinus, who trained thee to contend with skill against the adversary of our race. Glory to the Judge of thy contest! Glory to Him Who gave thee the victory over Satan! Glory to Him Who hath awarded thee the wreath of victory!

Glory..., Now and ever...: Theotokion—

Stretching forth thy divine hands wherewith thou didst bear the Creator Who in His goodness became incarnate, O all-holy Virgin, beg thou that He deliver from temptations, sorrows and tribulations us who praise thee with love and cry out: Glory to Him Who dwelt within thee! Glory to Him Who came forth from thee! Glory to Him Who hath delivered us by thy birthgiving!

Stavrotheotokion—

In awe at Thy great and awesome forbearance, O Savior, the all-pure one lamented bitterly and cried out to Thee Who wast crucified on the Cross by the iniquitous and Whose side was pierced with a spear by the soldiers: Glory to Thy love for man!

Glory to Thy goodness! Glory to Thee Who by Thy death hast rendered man immortal!

ODE IV

Irmos: Thy virtue hath covered the heavens, O Christ, and all things have been filled with Thy praise, O Lord.

Pious men offered up praise to Christ at Glastonbury when the holy David restored the monastery there.

Poisonous had the waters at Bath become, but by the power of Christ, David made them fit for use again.

Enlightening all the Britons, everywhere the holy one went he built churches, wherein to praise the Lord.

Theotokion: The Theotokos was full of the beauty of all the virtues; wherefore, the heavens resound with her praises.

ODE V

Irmos: Enlighten me who rise at dawn out of the night, I pray, O Thou Who lovest mankind, and guide me in Thy precepts; and teach me to do Thy will, O Savior.

Having filled the land with monastic habitations, the pious David made his abode in Menevia, where he taught the Savior's sacred precepts unto all.

Mortifying all carnal-mindedness, O God-bearer, rising at dawn out of the night thou didst show thyself to be a worthy model of all the Christian virtues.

Imitating the austerities of the ascetics of the Thebaïd, thy monks, bending their will to thine, O saint, committed themselves to fasting and constant prayer.

Theotokion: Rising at dawn out of the night, I beg the merciful Mother of God with tears and sighs, that by her intercession I may learn to do the will of her Son.

ODE VI

Irmos: With all my heart I cried out to the compassionate God, and He heard my cry from the uttermost depths of hades, and hath led my life up from corruption.

Abstaining from all but bread and pulse, and slaking their thirst with water alone, led by thee thy monks attained deliverance from corruption.

Constant was thy mental prayer, O saint, for thou didst follow the injunction of the Apostle to pray without ceasing; and God led thee up from hades.

Leading the sheep of thy flock like a good shepherd, O wondrous pastor, thou didst drive from them the demonic wolves, delivering their souls.

Theotokion: Every true Christian crieth out in anguish to the compassionate Bride of God; and, hearkening to our pleas, she entreateth her Son to lead up their life from corruption.

Kontakion, in Tone IV: Spec. Mel.; "O Thou Who wast lifted up willingly on the Cross..."—

O thou who didst willingly take up thy cross and follow Christ the Lord, and didst fill thy land with new communities dedicated to Him, send down from heaven the grace of God, O great and wondrous David, that we Christians may prevail over all heresies, having thee as an invincible ally amid our struggle for piety.

Ikos: Let us now fittingly praise David, the hierarch of Christ, for he was called by God from his mother's womb to sanctify the people of Wales, and by them was chosen to be their chief bishop; and conducting his ministry in a God-pleasing manner, he brought multitudes to salvation by the gifts of the Spirit which abode in him; wherefore, he is the great boast of all the Welsh, and an invincible ally amid our struggle for piety.

ODE VII

Irmos: We have sinned, we have committed iniquity, we have dealt unjustly before Thee. We have neither done nor acted as Thou hast commanded us. But forsake us not utterly, O God of our fathers.

Sinful and iniquitous is the accursed heresy of Pelagius, who belittled the power of divine grace and exalted the feeble efforts of man's will; but David set his blasphemy utterly at naught.

Like mute fish did the defenders of Pelagius become, being utterly silenced when the holy one made clear the doctrines of piety by the grace and power wherewith Christ filled his godly mouth.

Inspiring the faithful of Wales to turn from heresy and embrace the Truth, David was acclaimed as a champion of piety, who would in nowise forsake the true worship of the God of our fathers.

Theotokion: Knowing the magnitude of our sinfulness and the multitude of our iniquities, we would despair of all mercy; but forsake us not utterly in thy supplications, O all-immaculate and merciful Lady.

ODE VIII

Irmos: In the flame the youths gave the command to hymn God the Father and Creator, the consubstantial Son and the Spirit of God: Let all creation bless the Lord and exalt Him supremely for all ages!

Ever did the holy David exhort his flock to worship the All-holy Trinity — the unoriginate Father, His only-begotten Son, and the all-holy Spirit — in Orthodox manner exalting Him supremely for all ages.

“Having taken up the saving yoke of Christ with single mind, bear it to the end,” the holy David cried out to his brethren, “and whatsoever ye have seen with me and heard, keep it and fulfill.”

O the love of the saint for the sheep which Christ, the Chief Shepherd, had given into his care! For, dying, he earnestly besought them to bless the Lord and exalt Him supremely for all ages.

Theotokion: Lambent is the light of thy grace,

and though the furnace of our fiery passions rageth mightily, rescue us from its flames, O Mother of our God Who is exalted supremely for all ages.

ODE IX

Irmos: Finding everlasting deliverance from the dread sentence brought upon our race by our first father Adam, with the bodiless ones we glorify thine Offspring Who was begotten from on high, magnifying thee, the Theotokos, with hymns.

Ye saints of Wales, like bees returning with all speed to the hive at the approach of a storm were ye, forewarned by God that thy father and hierarch David would soon depart to his Master and Creator; wherefore, ye magnified him with hymns.

Dying in body, O holy hierarch, thy pure soul took wing, and the venerable Kentigern beheld it, soaring aloft, upborne to the heights of heaven by the hands of angelic beings; wherefore, we praise and glorify thy holy memory with hymns of joy.

Empty now lieth thy holy tomb, O protector of Wales, and over the ages thy precious relics have been dispersed near and far; yet in spirit thou abidest with all the saints of the Most High, ever sending heavenly aid to us who magnify thee with hymns.

Theotokion: When we must needs stand before the dread tribunal of thy Son and give answer for our countless crimes, O daughter of Adam and Mother of Christ, stand thou with us, and plead for us who magnify thee, the all-holy Theotokos, with hymns.

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To our personal enemies, according to Christ's commandment, we must forgive everything, but with the enemies of God we cannot have peace! Friendship with the enemies of God makes us ourselves the enemies of God: this is a betrayal and treason towards God, under whatever well-seeming pretexts it might be done, and here no kind of cunning or skillful self-justification can help us!

— Archbishop Averky, “Holy Zeal”

LIFE OF ST. ANTHONY THE GREAT

(Part III; conclusion; continued from #175)

BOOK III

ST. ANTHONY'S WORK FOR OTHERS

CHAPTER XI

The Persecution Under Maximinus

As Anthony made this discourse, all rejoiced. It increased the love of virtue in some, in some it cast out carelessness, and in others it ended self-conceit. All were persuaded to despise the plottings of the devil, admiring the grace which God had given to Anthony for the discerning of spirits.

The monasteries in the hills were like tents filled with heavenly choirs, singing, studying, fasting, praying, rejoicing for the hope of the life to come, laboring in order to give alms, having love and harmony amongst themselves. In truth it was like a land of religion and justice to see, a land apart. For neither wronger nor wronged was there, nor plaint of tax-gathering, but rather a multitude of ascetics, all with one purpose to virtue, so that, looking back on the monasteries and on so fair an array of monks, one cried aloud: "How lovely are thy dwellings, O Jacob, and thy tents, O Israel; like shady groves, and like a garden by a river, and like tents that the Lord hath pitched, and like cedars by the waters" [Num 24:5].

As usual, Anthony himself retired to his own monastery alone and went on with his holy life, groaning daily at thought of the mansions of heaven, longing for them, and seeing the shortness of man's life. For when going to food and sleep and the other needs of the body, shame came on him, thinking of the spirituality of the soul. Often when he was to eat with many other monks, the thought of the spirit's food came back upon him, and he excused himself and went a long way from them, thinking it shame that he should be seen eating by others. Yet he ate alone, for the needs of the body; but often too with the brethren, ashamed on their account, but emboldened by the words of help he gave them.

He used to say that we should give all our time to the soul rather than to the body. A little time indeed we must of necessity allow to the body, but

in the main we must devote ourselves to the soul and seek its profit, that it may not be dragged down by the pleasures of the body, but rather that the body be made subject to the soul. It was of this that the Savior spoke: "Be not solicitous for your life, what you shall eat, nor for your body, what you shall put on" [Lk 12:22]; and "seek not what you may eat or what you may drink, and be not lifted up; for all these things do the nations of the world seek. But your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things. But seek ye first His kingdom, and all these things shall be added to you" [Lk 12:29].

After this, the persecution which then befell under Maximinus overtook the Church. When the holy martyrs were taken to Alexandria, Anthony also quitted his monastery and followed, saying, "Let us too go that we may suffer if we are called, or else we may look on the sufferers." He had a longing to be martyred but, not wishing to give himself up, he ministered to the confessors in the mines and in the prisons. In the hall of judgment he was full of zeal for those who were called, stirring them to generosity in their struggles, and in their martyrdom receiving them and escorting them to the end.

Then the judge, seeing the fearlessness of Anthony and his companions and their zeal in this work, gave orders that none of the monks should appear in the judgment hall, or stay in the city at all. All the others thought best to stay hidden that day, but Anthony cared so much for it that he washed his tunic all the more, and on the next day stood on a high place in front and showed himself plainly to the prefect. While all wondered at this, and the prefect saw as he went through with his escort, Anthony himself stood fearless, showing the eagerness which belongs to us Christians, for he was praying that he too might be martyred, as I have said. He himself mourned because he was not martyred. But God was keeping him to help us and others, that to many he might be a teacher of the strict life which he had himself learned from the Scriptures. For simply at seeing his behavior many were eager to become followers of his way of life. Again, therefore, he ministered as before to the

confessors and, as though sharing their bonds, he wearied himself in serving them.

When later the persecution ceased and Bishop Peter of blessed memory had died a martyr, Anthony departed and went back to his monastery and abode there, a daily martyr to conscience, fighting the fights of the Faith. He practiced a high and more intense asceticism; he fasted constantly; his clothing was hair within and skin without, and this he kept until his death. He never bathed his body in water for cleanliness, or even washed his feet; neither would he consent to put them in water at all without necessity. Neither was he ever seen undressed, nor till he died did any ever see the body of Anthony uncovered.

CHAPTER XII

In the Heart of the Desert (at Der Mar Antonios, between the Nile and the Red Sea)

When he retired and intended to pass a season neither going forth himself nor admitting any, a certain captain of soldiers, Martinianus, came and disturbed him, for he had a daughter beset by a demon. Though he stayed long, beating the door and asking him to come and pray to God for the child, Anthony would not open, but leaned down from above and said, "Man, why do you cry to me? I am a man like yourself. But if you trust in Christ Whom I serve, go, and as you trust, so pray to God, and it shall be done." And he, at once believing and calling on Christ, went away with his daughter made clean from the demon.

The Lord did many other things through Anthony, for He says "Ask, and it shall be given to you" [Lk 11:9]. Though he opened not the door, many sufferers simply slept outside the monastery, trusted and prayed sincerely, and were cleansed.

Seeing that many thronged to him, and that he was not allowed to retire in his own way as he wished, anxious lest from what the Lord did through him, either he should be lifted up [II Cor 12:6] or another should think about him above the truth, he looked around him and set out to go to the upper Thebaïd, where he was not known. He had gotten loaves from the brethren and was sitting by the banks of the river, watching whether

a boat should pass, that he might embark and go with them.

While he was thus minded, a voice came to him from above: "Anthony, where are you going, and why?" He was not alarmed, being accustomed to often thus be called, but rather listened and answered, "Since the crowds will not let me be alone, I want to go to the upper Thebaïd because of the many annoyances here, and especially because they ask of me things beyond my power." And the voice said to him, "Even if you should go up to the Thebaïd or, as you are considering, down to the pastures, you will have greater and twice as great a burden to bear. But if you wish to be really alone, go up now to the inner desert." Anthony said, "And who will show me the way? For I know it not." And at once he was shown some Saracens setting out that way. Advancing and drawing near, Anthony asked to go with them into the desert, and they welcomed him as though by the command of Providence. He traveled with them three days and three nights and came to a very high hill. There was water under the hill, perfectly clear, sweet, and very cold. Beyond was flat land, and a few wild date-palms.

As though moved by God, Anthony fell in love with the place, for this was the place indicated by the voice which had spoken to him at the river-bank. At the beginning he got bread from his fellow-travelers and abode alone on the hill, none other being with him, for he kept the place from then on as one who has found again his own home. The Saracens themselves, who had seen Anthony's earnestness, used to travel that way on purpose and were glad to bring him bread. He had also a small and frugal refreshment from the date-palms.

Later, when the brethren learned of the place, they were careful to send to him, as children mindful of their father. But Anthony, seeing that on account of the bread some were footsore and endured fatigue, and wishing to spare the monks in that matter also, took counsel with himself. He asked some of those who visited him to bring him a pronged hoe, an axe, and some corn. When they were brought, he went over the ground around the hill and, finding a very small patch which was suitable, he tilled it and sowed it, having water in abundance from the spring. This he did every year,

and had bread thence, and was glad that he should trouble no one on this account, but in all things kept himself from being a burden.

But later, seeing that people were coming to him again, he grew also a few vegetables, that the visitors might have some little refreshment after the weariness of that hard road. At first the beasts in the desert often damaged his crops and his garden when they came for water but, catching one of the beasts, he said graciously to all, "Why do you harm me when I do not harm you? Begone, and in the name of the Lord do not come near these things again." And thereafter, as though fearing his command, they did not approach the place.

He then was alone in the inner hills, devoting himself to prayer and spiritual exercise. But the brethren who ministered to him asked that they might bring him each month olives and pulse and oil, for he was now an old man.

How many wrestlings he endured while he dwelt there we have learned from those who visited him, not against flesh and blood, as it is written, but against opposing demons [Eph 6:12]. For there also they heard tumults and many voices and clashing as of weapons, and at night they saw the hill full of wild beasts, and him they saw fighting as with visible foes, and praying against them. His visitors he comforted, but he himself fought, bending his knees and entreating the Lord.

It was indeed a thing to admire that, being alone in such a wilderness, he was neither dismayed by the attacks of devils, nor with so many four-footed and creeping things there did he fear their savageness. Rather, in accordance with the Scripture, he trusted the Lord truly like Mount Sion, with a mind tranquil and untossed, so that rather the devils fled, and the wild beasts kept peace with him, as it is written [Ps 124].

Thus the devil watched Anthony and gnashed his teeth against him [Ps 111:20], as David says in the psalm. But Anthony had consolations from the Savior, and abode unharmed by his wickedness and his many arts. He set wild beasts on him when watching at night. Almost all the hyenas in that desert, coming out of their dens, surrounded him. He was in their midst, and each with open mouth threatened to bite him. But, knowing the enemy's

craft, he said to them all, "If you have received power over me I am ready to be eaten by you, but if you are sent by devils, delay not, but go, for I am Christ's servant." On this they fled, his words chasing them like a whip.

A few days after, while he was working (for he was careful to work), someone stood at the door and pulled the string of his work, for he was weaving baskets, which he gave to his visitors in exchange for what they brought. He rose and saw a beast, resembling a man as far as the thighs, but with legs and feet like a donkey. Anthony simply crossed himself and said, "I am Christ's servant; if you are sent against me, here I am," and the monster with its demons fled so fast that for very speed it fell and died. The death of the beast was the demons' fall, for they were hastening to do everything to drive him back from the desert, but they could not.

CHAPTER XIII *The Teacher of Monks*

Once, having been asked by the monks to return to them and oversee their dwellings from time to time, he set out with the monks who had come to meet him. A camel carried bread and water for them, for that desert is waterless, and there is no drinkable water at all except in the one hill whence they had drawn it, there where his monastery is located. On the way, their water supply failed, and they were all in danger, as the heat was intense. Having searched around and found no water, now unable even to walk, they lay down on the ground and let the camel go, giving themselves up. But the elder, seeing all in danger, was much grieved and, groaning, went a little way from them and prayed, bending his knees and lifting his hands. At once the Lord made a spring come forth there where he was praying, and so all drank and were refreshed. Filling their waterskins, they sought the camel and found it, for it happened that the rope had wrapped around a stone and so it was held fast. They brought it back and watered it and, putting the skins on it, continued their journey unharmed.

When he came to the outer monasteries, all welcomed him, seeing him as a father. And he, as though he had brought with him supplies from the

mount, entertained them with discourse and imparted help. Thus there was joy anew in the hills, eagerness to advance, and each drew courage from the faith of the rest. He too rejoiced to see the zeal of the monks, and to find that his sister had grown old in her virginity and was herself a guide to other virgins.

After some days he returned to his hill. From that time, many came to see him, and some who were sufferers dared the journey. For all monks who came to see him he always had this advice: to trust in the Lord and love Him, to keep themselves from bad thoughts and bodily pleasures, and not to be led astray by the feasting of the stomach, as it is written in Proverbs; to flee vainglory, to pray always, to sing psalms before sleeping and after, to repeat by heart the commandments of the Scriptures and to remember the deeds of the saints, that by their example the soul might train itself under the guidance of the commandments.

Especially did he advise them to give continual heed to the Apostle's word, "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath" [Eph 4:27], and to consider that this was spoken about all the commandments alike — so that the sun should not go down, not simply on our anger, but on any other of our sins. For it is right and necessary that the sun not condemn us for any sin by day, nor the moon for any fall or even thought by night. "To safeguard this it is well to hear and observe the Apostle, for he says 'Judge yourselves and prove yourselves' [II Cor 13:5].

"Daily, then, let each take account with himself of the day's and the night's doings, and if he has sinned, let him cease. And if he has not, let him not boast, but abide in the good and not grow careless, neither judge his neighbor, neither justify himself, as the blessed apostle Paul said, till the Lord come Who searcheth hidden things. For often we miss seeing what we do, and we do not know, but the Lord misses nothing.

"To Him, therefore, let us leave judgment. With each other let us have sympathy, and bear one another's burdens. Ourselves let us judge, and where we fail be earnest to amend. For a safeguard against sinning, use this manner of observing: let us each note and write down our deeds and the movements of the soul as if to tell them to each other, and be sure that from utter shame of being known, we

shall cease from sinning end even from thinking anything bad.

"For who likes to be seen when he is sinning or, having sinned, does not rather lie, wishing to hide it? Just as we should do no foulness in sight of each other, so if we write our thoughts as if telling them to each other, we shall better guard ourselves from foul thoughts, for shame of being known. Let the written tale be to us, instead of the eyes of our fellow monks that, shamed as much at writing as at being seen, we may not even think evil. Molding ourselves in this way, we shall be able to master the body, to please God, and to trample on the snares of the enemy."

CHAPTER XIV

Miracles

This was his instruction to those who visited him. To sufferers he gave compassion and prayed with them, and often the Lord heard him in many ways. He neither boasted when he was heard, nor murmured when not, but always gave thanks to God and urged the sufferers to be patient and know that healing belonged not to him nor to any man, but to God Who doeth when He will and to whom He will. The sufferers took the old man's words in place of healing, since they had learned to suffer with patience and not with shrinking. The cured learned not to thank Anthony, but God alone.

A man named Fronton from Palatium had a terrible disease. He was biting his tongue, and his eyes were in danger. He came to the hill and begged Anthony to pray for him. When he had prayed he said to Fronton "Depart and you shall be healed." Fronton objected and for days stayed in the house, while Anthony continued saying "You cannot be healed while you stay here. Go, and when you reach Egypt you shall see the sign which is wrought on you." The man believed and went. As soon as he came in sight of Egypt he was freed from his sickness and made well, in accordance with the word of Anthony, which he had learned from the Savior in prayer.

A girl from Busiris in Tripoli had a dreadful and distressing sickness, a discharge from eyes, nose and ears, which turned to worms when it fell to the

ground. Her body was paralyzed and her eyes unnatural. Her parents, hearing of monks who were going to Anthony, and having faith in the Lord Who healed the woman with an issue of blood [Matt 9:20], asked to accompany them with their daughter, and they consented. The parents and their child remained below the hill with Paphnutius, the confessor and monk. The others went up but, when they wished to tell about the girl, Anthony interrupted them and described the child's sufferings and how they had traveled with them. On their asking that these also might come to him, he would not allow it, but said, "Go, and you will find her cured if she is not dead. For this is not my work, that she should come to a wretched man like me, but healing is the Savior's, Who doeth His mercy in all places to those who call upon Him. To this child also the Lord hath granted her prayer, and His love has made known to me that He will heal her sickness while she is here." So the marvel came to pass. Going out, they found the parents rejoicing and the girl in sound health.

Two of the brethren were traveling to him, when their water failed, and one died and the other was dying. He no longer had strength to go on, and lay on the ground awaiting death. But Anthony, sitting on the hill, called two monks who happened to be there and urged them, "Take a jar of water and run down the road towards Egypt, for two were coming and one has just died, and the other will if you do not hasten. This has just been shown to me in prayer." So the monks went and found the one lying a corpse and buried him, and the other they revived with water and brought him to the old man, for the distance was a day's journey. If anyone ask why he did not speak before the other died, he asks amiss in so speaking. For the sentence of death was not from Anthony, but from God, Who so decreed about the one and revealed concerning the other. In Anthony only this is wonderful, that while he sat on the hill and watched in heart, the Lord revealed to him things afar.

For another time also, as he was sitting there and looking up, he saw in the air someone borne along, and great rejoicing in all who met him. Wondering at such a choir, and thinking of their blessedness, he

prayed to learn what this might be. And at once a voice came to him, that this was the soul of the monk Amun in Nitria. He had lived as an ascetic till old age. Now the distance from Nitria to the hill where Anthony was is thirteen days' journey. Those who were with Anthony, seeing the old man in admiration, asked to know, and heard from him that Amun had just died. He was well known, because he often visited there, and because through him many miracles had come to pass, of which this was one.

Once, when he had need to cross the river called Lycus, the waters being in flood, he asked his companion Theodore to keep far from him that they might not see each other swimming naked in the river. Theodore went, but he was again ashamed to see himself naked. But while he was yet ashamed and pondering, he was suddenly carried to the other side. Theodore, himself a devout man, came up and, seeing that Amun was first and unwetted by the water, asked to know how he had crossed. Seeing that he did not wish to speak, he seized his feet, declaring that he would not let him go till he had heard. Amun, seeing Theodore's obstinacy, especially from his speech, asked him in turn not to tell anyone till his death, and then told him that he had been carried across and set down on the other side — that he had not walked on the water, for this was a thing not possible for men, but only for the Lord and those to whom He granted it, as He did to the great apostle Peter [Matt 14:29]. And Theodore related this after Amun's death.

Now the monks to whom Anthony spoke of Amun's death noted the day and when, thirty days later, the brethren came from Nitria, they inquired and found that Amun had fallen asleep at the day and hour when the old man saw his soul carried up. And both these and the others were all amazed how pure was the soul of Anthony, that he should learn at once what happened thirteen days away, and should see the soul in its flight.

Again, Archelæus the Count once met him in the outer hills and asked him only to pray for Polycratia, the renowned and Christ-like virgin of Laodicæa, for she was suffering much with her stomach and side, through her great mortifications, and was weak throughout her body. Anthony

therefore prayed, and the count made a note of the day when the prayer was made. Departing to Laodicæa, he found the virgin well. Asking when and on what day she had been freed from her sickness, he brought out the paper on which he had written the time of the prayer. When he heard, he immediately showed the writing on the paper, and all recognized with wonder that the Lord had freed her from her pains at the moment when Anthony was praying and invoking the goodness of the Savior on her behalf.

Often he spoke days beforehand of those who were coming to him, and sometimes a month before, and of the cause for which they came. For some came simply to see him, some through sickness, some suffering from devils. And all thought the toil of the journey no trouble or loss, for each returned feeling helped. Anthony, while he said and saw such things, begged that none should admire him in this regard, but rather should admire the Lord, Who grants to us men to know Him in our own measure.

Another time, when he had gone down to the outer monasteries and was asked to enter a ship and pray with the monks, he alone perceived a horrible, pungent smell. The crew said that there were fish and pickled meat in the boat, and that the smell was from them. But he said it was different, and even as he spoke came a sudden shriek from a young man possessed by a devil, who had come on board earlier and was hiding in the vessel. Being charged in the name of our Lord Jesus, the devil went out, and the man was made whole. Then all knew that the foul smell was from an evil spirit.

Another came to him, one of the nobles, having a devil. The demon was so dreadful that the possessed man did not know he was going to Anthony. He even used to eat the filth of his own body. Those who brought him begged Anthony to pray for him. And Anthony, pitying the youth, prayed and watched the whole night with him. His friends were indignant, but Anthony said, "Do not be angry with the youth; it is not he, but the demon in him; for, being rebuked and commanded to depart into waterless places, he became furious, and has done this. Therefore glorify God, for his attacking

me in this was is a sign to you of the demon's going away." And when Anthony had said this, the youth was at once made whole. Then, in his right mind, he recognized where he was and embraced the old man, thanking God.

CHAPTER XV

Visions

Many other such things are related by numerous monks to have been done through him, and their stories agree. Yet these are not so marvelous as the greater wonders that he saw. Once, when he was about to eat and stood up to pray, about the ninth hour, he felt himself carried away in spirit. A strange thing, as he stood he saw himself as though outside of himself and being guided by others through the air, and also foul and terrible beings stationed in the air and seeking to hinder his passage. As his guides resisted, the others demanded a reckoning, if he were not liable to them. But when they would have taken an account from his birth, Anthony's guides stopped them, saying: "All from the time of his birth the Lord has wiped out; but from the time he became a monk and promised himself to God you can take account."

Then, as they accused him but proved nothing, the path became free and unhindered for him, and he saw himself approaching and re-entering himself, and so once more he was Anthony. Then, forgetting to eat, he remained the rest of the day and all the night groaning and praying, for he was amazed to see how many we fight against, and with what great labors we have to pass through the air. And he remembered that this is what the Apostle said: "According to the ruler of the power of the air" [Eph 2:2]. For herein has the enemy his power, in fighting and trying to stop those who pass through.

For this cause he especially exhorted us: "Take ye up the armor of God that ye may be able to withstand the evil day" [Eph 6:13]; "that, having no ill to say about us, the enemy may be put to shame" [Titus 2:8]. And let us who have learned this remember the Apostle's words: "Whether in the body I know not, or out of the body, I know not; God knoweth" [II Cor 12:2]. But Paul was rapt to the third heaven, and heard unspeakable words,

and returned; whereas Anthony saw himself entering the air and struggling till he was proved free.

Another favor he had from God. When he sat alone in the mountain, if ever he looked into any matter with himself and could not see his way, it was revealed to him by Providence in prayer. He was one of the blessed who are taught of God, as it is written [Jn 6:45]. So later, when he had a discussion with some visitors about the life of the soul and the kind of place it will have hereafter, in the following night one called him from above, saying, "Anthony, rise and go out and look." He went out (for he knew which voices to obey) and, looking up, saw a great figure, formless and terrible, standing and reaching to the clouds, and people going up as if on wings. And the figure was stretching out his hands. Some he stopped, and others flew above, and passing by him rose without trouble thereafter. At these he gnashed his teeth, but exulted over those who fell. Then a voice came to Anthony, "Understand the vision." And, his mind being opened, he understood that it was the passing of souls, and that the great figure standing was the enemy who hates the faithful. Those who are in his power he seizes, and stops them from passing. But those who have not yielded to him he cannot seize; they pass him by. Having seen this, he took it as a reminder, and strove the more to advance each day.

He did not willingly relate these things to others. But when he had long prayed and admired them in his own heart, and his companions questioned and pressed him, he was forced to speak, being unable as a father to hide these things from his own children, thinking also that while his own conscience was clear, the telling might be a help to them, teaching that the religious life bears good fruit, and that often there is comfort for its hardships in its visions.

BOOK IV

ANTHONY'S LAST YEARS

CHAPTER XVI

His Devotion to God's Church

Anthony was by disposition long-suffering and humble of soul. Being what he was, he yet revered the law of the Church exceedingly, and he

would have every cleric honored above himself. He was not ashamed to bow his head before bishops and priests, and if ever a deacon came to him to seek help, he spoke what was needed to help him. But in regard to prayers, he gave place to him, thinking it no shame that he should be taught. For often he would ask questions, and beg to hear his companions, and acknowledge that he was helped if someone said something useful. His face had a grace in it great and beyond belief. He had this further gift from the Savior: if he was with a company of monks and someone wished to see him who did not know him before, as soon as he arrived he would pass over the others and run straight to Anthony as if drawn by his eyes.

Not by appearance or figure was he different from others, but by his ordered character and the purity of his soul. For his soul being at peace, he had also his outer senses untroubled, so that from the joy of his soul his face also was joyous, and from the body's movements one saw and knew the state of the soul, according to Scripture: "When the heart is merry the face is glad; when in grief, the face is gloomy" [Prov 15:13]. So Jacob knew when Laban was devising a plot, and said to his wives: "Your father's countenance is not as yesterday and the day before" [Gen 31:5]. So Samuel knew David, for he had eyes that moved joy, and teeth white as milk [I Kgs 16:12]. And so too was Anthony known. He was never troubled, his soul being tranquil; he was never gloomy, his mind being glad.

To the faith his devotion was wonderful. He never held communion with the Meletian schismatics, knowing their wickedness and rebellion from the beginning; nor had he friendly converse with the Manichæans nor any other heretics, save only to warn them to return their duty, believing and teaching that their friendship and society was a harm and ruin to the soul. So also he loathed the Arian heresy, and taught all neither to go near them nor to partake of their ill-faith. Once when some of the Ariomanites came to him and he questioned them and found them misbelievers, he drove them from the hill, saying that their words were worse than the poison of serpents.

Again, when the Arians lied about him, that he believed as they, he was angry with them. Then,

urged by the bishops and all the other brethren, he came down from hill and, entering Alexandria, denounced the Arians, saying this was the last heresy and the forerunner of Antichrist. He taught the people that the Son of God is not a creature, neither is He begotten out of nothingness; but that He is the eternal Word and Wisdom of the Father's being. "Therefore it is impious to say there was a time when He was not; for the Word was always co-existing with the Father. Wherefore, do ye have no fellowship at all with these most impious Arians, 'for there is no fellowship of light with darkness' [II Cor 6:14]. For you are devout Christians; but these who say that the Son and Wisdom of God is a creature differ nothing from the heathen, worshipping the creature before God the Creator. Be ye sure that the whole creation is aroused against these men, because they count among creatures the Creator and Lord of all, in Whom all things were made."

The people all rejoiced to hear so great a man anathematize the heresy which attacks Christ, and all the citizens ran together to see Anthony. Greeks, too, and even their so-called priests came to the church, saying "We ask to see the man of God" — for so all called him. For there also the Lord through him cleansed many from demons, and healed the mad. Many Greeks asked only to touch the old man, believing they should be helped. Naturally, in those few days as many became Christians as else one would have seen in a year. Some thought that he was annoyed by the crowds, and therefore were keeping the people from him. But he, untroubled, answered, "These are no more numerous than the demons with whom we wrestle in the hills."

When he was leaving* and we were setting him on his way, a woman from behind shouted "Wait,

man of God; my daughter is grievously troubled with a devil; wait, I beseech thee, lest I hurt myself running!" The old man, hearing this and being asked by us, waited willingly. When the woman drew near, the child was hurled to the ground. Anthony prayed, and spoke the name of Christ, and the child rose up healed, the unclean spirit being gone out of her. The mother blessed God, and all gave thanks. And he too rejoiced, departing to the hill as to his own home.

CHAPTER XVII

The Gift of Understanding

He was extremely prudent. The wonderful thing was that, not having learned letters, he was yet a quick-witted and clever man. Once, two Greek philosophers came to him, thinking they could experiment on Anthony. He was then in the outer hills. Understanding the men from their looks, he went out to them and said through an interpreter, "Why, O philosophers, have you toiled all this way to a foolish man?" And when they answered that he was not foolish, but very wise, he said to them, "If you have come to a fool, your labor is useless; but if you think me wise, then become as I; for we ought to imitate what is good. If I had gone to you, I would have imitated you. As you have come to me, become as I; for I am a Christian." They departed in wonder, for they saw that even demons feared Anthony.

Some others of the same kind met him again in the outer hills, and thought to mock him because he had not learned letters. Anthony said to them, "And what say you, which is first, the mind or letters? And which is the cause of which, the mind of letters, or letters of the mind?" When they answered that the mind is first and the inventor of letters, Anthony said, "Then to one whose mind is sound, letters are needless." This answer astounded both them and the listeners. They went away marveling to see such wisdom in a plain man.** For

** One of the philosophers came to the holy Anthony and said, "Father, how do you keep up without the comfort of books?" And Anthony said, "My book is nature; and wherever I will, I can read the words of God." [Socrates, *Hist.*, IV, c. 23]

* Socrates, *Hist.* IV, c. 25, relates an incident of this journey: It is said that earlier Anthony had met this Didymus in the time of Valens, when he went down to Alexandria from the desert because of the Arians and that, finding the intelligence of the man, he said to him: "Let not the loss of your bodily eyes trouble you, Didymus; for the eyes that are failing you are only such as flies and gnats also can see with. But rejoice that you have the eyes wherewith angels see, by which God is seen, and His light is received."

he had not the rough character of one who is reared in the hills and grows old there, but he was both gracious and courteous. His speech was seasoned with the wisdom of God, so that none had ill-will against him. Rather, all who went to see him rejoiced on his account.

Later some others came. They were of those who among the Greeks seem to be wise. When they asked of him an account of our faith in Christ, and tried to argue about the preaching of the Cross of God, and wished to scoff, Anthony waited for a little and, first pitying them for their ignorance, said through an interpreter (who could render his words excellently), "Which is nobler: to confess the Cross, or to attribute adulteries and impurities to those who among you are called gods? For to say what we say is a sign of manly courage; but yours is a yielding to lewdness. Next, which is better: to say that the Word of God was not changed, but remaining the same He took to him a human body to help and save men in order that, sharing our human birth, He might make men sharers of the divine and spiritual nature; or to liken the divine to senseless things, and for that cause to worship beasts and serpents and images of men? For these are the things worshipped by you who are wise. And how do you dare to scoff at our saying that Christ appeared as a man, when you make the soul come from heaven, saying that it had strayed and fell from the vault of heaven into the body? — and would that it were only into the body of man, and not shared with beasts and serpents. Our Faith declares the coming of Christ to save men; but you talk amiss of the soul unbegotten. We believe the power of Providence and His love for men, that this also is not impossible with God. But you, calling the soul and image of the spirit, impute falls to it, and make fables of how it can be changed. And now through the soul you are making the spirit too a thing changeable. For as was the image, so needs must be that of which it is the image. And when you thus deem about the spirit, bear in mind that you are blaspheming also the Father of the Spirit.

"And touching the Cross, which would you say is better: when plotted against by wicked men to endure the Cross and not shrink from any manner of death whatever; or to tell tales of the wanderings

of Osiris and Isis, and the plots of Typhon, and the flight of Kronos, and swallowings of children and slayings of fathers? For this among you is wisdom. And if you mock at the Cross, why do you not marvel at the resurrection? For those who tell of the one wrote of the other too. Or why, when you remember the Cross, do you say nothing of the dead who were raised, the blind who saw, the paralytics who were cured and the lepers made clean, the walking on the sea, and the other signs and wonders which show Christ not as man but as God? To me it seems that you are utterly unfair to yourselves, and that you have not honestly read our Scriptures. But do you read them, and see that the things which Christ did prove Him to be God dwelling with us for men' salvation.

"But do you also tell us your own teachings. Though what could you say about brute things except brutishness and savagery? But if, as I hear, you wish to say that these things are spoken among you in figure, and you make the rape of Persephone an allegory of the earth, and Hæphæstus' lameness of the fire, and Hera of the air, and Apollo of the sun, and Artemis of the moon, and Poseidon of the sea — none the less, you are again worshipping that which is no god. You are serving the creature instead of the God Who created all. For if you have made up these tales because of the loveliness of the world, you are right to go so far as admiring it — but not to make gods of creatures, lest you give to things made the honor of the Maker. In that case, it is time you should hand over the architect's honor to the house he has built, or the general's honor to the soldier. Now, what do you say to all this? — that we may see if the Cross has anything that deserves to be scoffed at."

As they were quite at a loss, turning this way and that, Anthony smiled and said again through the interpreter: "All this is clear even at first sight. But since you lean rather on proofs and arguments and, because you have this art, you want us also not to worship God without reasoned proofs, do you first tell me this. How comes sure knowing of things, and especially knowledge about God? Is it through reasoned proof, or through a faith which acts? And which is earlier, the faith that acts, or proof by reasoning?" And when they answered that the faith

that acts comes earlier, and that this is the sure knowledge, Anthony said, "You say well; for that faith comes from the very build of the soul; but the art of logic from the skill of those who framed it. It follows that, to those who have an active belief, reasoned proofs are needless and probably useless. For what we know by faith, that you are trying to establish by argument. And often you cannot even put in words what we know; so that action of faith is better and more sure than your sophists' proofs.

"Now we Christians hold not our secret in the wisdom of Greek reasonings, but in the power of a faith which is added to us by God through Christ Jesus. For proof that this is a true account, look how without learning letters we believe in God, knowing from His works His providence over all things. And for our faith being a force which acts, look how we lean on the belief in Christ, whereas you lean on sophistical debates — and yet your monstrous idols are coming to naught, while our faith is spreading everywhere. You with your syllogisms and sophisms do not draw any from Christianity to Hellenism. We, teaching faith in Christ, despoil your superstition, for all are learning that Christ is God, and the Son of God. You with all your beauty of speech do not stop the teaching of Christ. But we, by naming Christ crucified, drive away all the demons whom you fear as gods. And where the sign of the Cross comes, magic fails and poisons do not work.

"For tell me, where are now your oracles, where the incantations of the Egyptians, where the phantoms of the magicians? When did all these cease and fall, but at the coming of the Cross of Christ? And is it the Cross then which deserves scorn, and not rather the things which by it have been made void and proved powerless? For this is another wonderful thing, that your teaching was never persecuted, but was honored by cities publicly, while the Christians are persecuted; and yet it is we and not you that flourish and grow. Your teachings, praised on all sides, guarded on all sides, perish; while the faith and teaching of Christ, mocked by you and persecuted by kings, has filled the world. For when did the knowledge of God so shine out? When did chastity and the virtue of virginity so show itself, or when was death so scorned as since the Cross of Christ came? And this no one doubts who looks at the martyrs

scorning death for Christ's sake, or looks at the virgins of the Church, who for Christ's sake keep their bodies pure and undefiled.

"These are sufficient proofs to show that for serving God, faith in Christ is the only true Faith. Even now, behold you who seek conclusions from reasonings — you have no faith. But we do not prove, as our teacher said, in persuasive words of Greek wisdom [I Cor 2:4]; we win men by faith, which lays hold of real things before argument can logically establish them. See, there are some standing here suffering from demons (they were people who had come to him beset by demons, and bringing them into the midst he said): Either do you make them clean by your syllogisms and by any art or magic if you wish, calling on your idols; or if you cannot, then cease attacking us, and see the power of the Cross of Christ." Having said this, he invoked Christ and signed the sufferers with the sign of the Cross twice and thrice. And at once the men stood up, whole now and in their right mind and blessing God. And the so-called philosophers were astonished and really stupefied at his wisdom and at the miracle that was done. But Anthony said, "Why do you wonder over this? It is not we who do it, but Christ, Who does these things through those who believe in Him. Believe, then, you also, and you will see that what we have is not a trick of words, but belief through a love which is active unto Christ, which, if you also have, you will no longer seek proofs by reasonings, but will think faith in Christ sufficient by itself."

This was Anthony's discourse. The men wondered at it, and departed embracing him and acknowledging that they had been helped.

CHAPTER XVIII

The Arian Persecution

The renown of Anthony reached even to kings. For on hearing of these things, Constantine Augustus and his sons, Constans Augustus and Constantius Augustus, wrote to him as to a father and begged to receive answers from him. He, however, did not value these writings or rejoice over the letters, but was just what he had been before the kings wrote to him.

When the letters were brought to him he called the monks and said, "Do not admire if a king writes to us, for he is a man; but admire rather that God has written the law for men, and has spoken to us by his own Son." He wished not to receive the letters, saying that he knew not what to answer to such. But being urged by the monks because the kings were Christians, and they might be scandalized as though he made them outcasts, he allowed them to be read. And he wrote back, welcoming them because they worshipped Christ and advised them, for their salvation, not to think much of things present, but rather to remember the coming judgment, and to know that the only true and eternal king is Christ. He begged them also to be lovers of men, to care for justice, and to care for the poor. And they were glad to receive his letter. So was he beloved by all, and so did all wish to hold him as a father.

With this character, and thus answering those who sought him, he returned again to the mount in the interior, and continued his usual life. Often when sitting or walking with visitors, he would become dumb, as is written in Daniel (10:15). After a time he would resume his usual discourse with the brethren, but they perceived that he was seeing some vision. For often in the mountain he saw things happening in Egypt, and described them to Bishop Serapion, who was within and saw Anthony occupied with the vision. Once, as he sat working, he became as in ecstasy, and in the vision he groaned constantly. Then after a time he turned to his companions, groaning. Trembling, he prayed, bending his knees and abiding a long time, and when he arose the old man was weeping. Then the others trembled and were much afraid and begged him to tell; and long they urged him till he was compelled to speak.

Then with a great groan he said, "Ah, my children, better it is to die than that there happen what I have seen in this vision." And they asked again he said with tears, "Wrath shall overtake the Church, and she shall be delivered up to men who are like senseless beasts. For I saw the table of the Lord, and around it mules standing on all sides in a ring and kicking what was within, as might be the

kicking of beasts in a wild frolic. You hear surely," he said, "how I was groaning; for I heard a voice saying, 'My altar shall be made an abomination.'"

So the old man said. And two years after came this present onset of the Arians and the plundering of the churches wherein, seizing by force the vessels, they had them carried away by pagans. When, too, they forced the pagans from their workshops to their meetings, and in their presence did what they would on the holy table. Then we all understood that the kicking of the mules had foreshown to Anthony what the Arians are now doing, brutishly as beasts. When he saw this vision, he comforted his companions, saying, "Do not lose heart, children; for as the Lord has been angry, so later will He bring healing. And the Church shall quickly regain her own beauty, and shine as before. And you shall see the persecuted restored, and impiety retiring to its own hiding places, and the true Faith in all places spoken openly with all freedom. Only, defile not yourselves with the Arians. For their teaching is not of the apostles, but of the demons and their father the devil. Indeed, from no source, from no sense, from a mind not right it comes, like the senselessness of mules."

CHAPTER XIX

His Spiritual Influence

Such was the life of Anthony. We must not disbelieve, when all these wonders are wrought through a man. For it is the promise of the Savior, Who said: "If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you shall say to this mountain, Depart hence, and it shall depart; and nothing shall be impossible to you" [Matt 17:19]. And again: "Amen, Amen, I say to you, if you ask the Father anything in My name He will give it to you. Ask and you shall receive" [Jn 16:23]. And it is He Who said to His disciples and to all who believe in Him: "Heal the sick; cast out devils; freely you have received, freely give" [Matt 10:8].

Anthony healed, therefore, not as one commanding, but praying and using the name of Christ, so that it was evident to all that the doer was not he, but the Lord, Who through Anthony showed his tenderness for men and healed the

sufferers. Only the prayer was Anthony's, and the ascetic life for the sake of which he had settled on the mountain. He was glad in the contemplation of heavenly things, grieved that so many disturbed him and dragged him down from the outer hills. For the judges all wanted him to come down from the mount, since it was impossible for them to go there because of the pleaders who followed them. But they asked him to go that they might only see him. He disliked and declined the journey to them. But they held their ground, and sent the prisoners up to him with soldiers, that by reason of these he might perhaps come down. So being constrained, and seeing them lamenting, he used to go to the outer hills; and his toil was not wasted, for to many he was a help and his coming a benefit. He helped the judges, counselling them to value justice above all else, and to fear God, and to know that with what judgment they judge, with such shall they be judged [Matt 7:2]. Yet he loved his abode in the hills above all other.

Once when he was thus constrained by those in need, and the officer of the soldiers had begged him by many messengers to come down, he went and discoursed a little on matters of salvation and on their own needs, and then was hastening back. When the captain asked him to stay longer, he answered that he could not be long with them, and satisfied him by a beautiful comparison, saying, "As fish which are long on dry land die, so do monks who linger among you and spend much time with you grow lax. Therefore we have to hasten to the hills as the fish to the sea, lest if we linger we should forget the inner life." The officer who heard this and much more from him said in admiration that surely this was a servant of God; for whence came wisdom so high and so great to a mere man, unless he were beloved of God?"

There was one officer, named Balakios, who sharply persecuted us Christians in his zeal for the abominable Arians. Since he was so cruel as to beat virgins and strip and flog monks, Anthony sent to him and wrote a letter to this intent: "I see wrath approaching you. Cease, therefore, persecuting Christians, lest the wrath overtake you; for even now it is nigh upon you." Balakios, laughing, threw the letter to the ground and spat on it. Insulting the

bearers, he told them to take this message back to Anthony: "Since you are anxious about the monks, I will now pay you a visit also."

Five days had not passed when the wrath overtook him. For Balakios and Nestorius, the prefect of Egypt, went out to the halting place of Chaireos, the first from Alexandria, and they were both riding on horses. These belonged to Balakios, the quietest he had. But before they reached the place they began to play with each other, as horses do. And suddenly the quieter of the two, upon which Nestorius was mounted, biting Balakios, threw him down and fell upon him, and so tore his thigh with its teeth that he was carried back to the city at once and died in three days. And all men marveled how what Anthony had foretold was quickly fulfilled.

In such wise did he warn the cruel. But others who came to him he brought to such a mind that they straightway forgot their disputes at law, and esteemed those blessed who withdraw from the world. But if any were wronged, he so defended them that one would think that he himself, and not other persons, had been wronged. He had such influence for good over all that many who were soldiers and many of the wealthy laid aside the burdens of their life and became monks. He was, in fact, like a healer given to Egypt by God. For who went to him in sorrow and did not return in joy? Who came mourning for his dead and did not quickly put aside his grief? Who came in anger and was not changed to kindness? Who sought him, desperate in his poverty, and hearing and seeing him did not learn to despise wealth and take comfort from poverty? What monk grown careless but became stronger from visiting him? What youth ever came to the mount and looked on Anthony but soon renounced pleasure and loved self-denial? Who came to him tempted by devils and was not freed? Who came with troubled thoughts and gained not peace of mind?

For this was another great thing in Anthony's holiness. Having, as I have said, the grace of discerning spirits, he knew their movements, and was not ignorant to what object each of them leans and impels. Not only was he himself not befooled by them, but others who were beset in their

thoughts he taught how they might defeat their snares, explaining the weakness and the wickedness of the tempters. Each, therefore, as though anointed by him for the fight, went down emboldened against all the contrivings of the devil and his demons.

Again, how many maidens who had suitors, seeing Anthony only from afar, remained virgins for Christ? From foreign lands, too, men came to him and, having received help with the rest, returned as if sent forth by their father. And, since he died, all are like fatherless orphans, comforting each other with the bare memory of him, and cherishing his teachings and his counsels.

CHAPTER XX *His Death*

The manner of the end of his life I ought also to tell, and you to hear eagerly, for this also is a pattern to imitate. He was visiting as usual the monks in the outer hills and, learning of his end from Providence, he spoke to the brethren, saying, "This is the last visiting of you that I shall make. And I wonder if we shall see each other again in this life. It is time now for me to be dissolved, for I am near a hundred and five years." Hearing this, they wept, clasping and embracing the old man. But he talked joyously, as one leaving a foreign town to go to his own, and bade them "not to fail in their labors nor lose heart in their strict life, but to live as dying daily and, as I have said before, to be earnest to guard the heart from unclean thoughts; to vie with the holy; not to go near the Meletian schismatic, for you know their wicked and profane heresy; nor to have any fellowship with the Arians, for the impiety of these is evident to all. Be not troubled if you see judges protecting them, for their triumph will end; it is mortal and short-lived. Therefore do ye keep yourselves clean from these, and guard the tradition of the Fathers, and above all the loving faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, which you have learned from the Scriptures and have often been put in mind of by me."

When the brethren pressed him to stay with them and die there, he would not, for many reasons, as he implied without saying, but on this account chiefly: To the bodies of religious men, especially

of the holy martyrs, the Egyptians like to give funeral honors and wrap them in fine linens, but not to bury them in the earth, but to place them on couches and keep them at home with them, thinking by this to honor the departed. Anthony often asked the bishops to tell the people about this, and likewise shamed laymen and reproved women, saying this was not right or even reverent. For the bodies of the patriarchs and prophets are preserved even till now in tombs, and the very body of our Lord was put in a sepulcher, and a stone set against it hid it till He rose the third day. He said this to show that he does wrong who after death does not bury the bodies of the dead, holy though they may be. For what is greater or holier than the Lord's body? Many, therefore, hearing him, buried thenceforward in the ground, and thanked God that they had the right teaching.

Knowing this, and fearing lest they might thus treat his body also, Anthony hastened and took leave of the monks in the outer hills. Returning to the inner hills where he was accustomed to dwell, he fell sick after a few months. He called those who were there (they were two who lived in the house, who had been fifteen years in the religious life, and ministered to him because of his great age) and said to them: "I am going the way of my fathers, as the Scripture says [Josh 23:14]; for I see myself called by the Lord. Be you wary, and undo not your long service of God, but be earnest to keep your strong purpose as though you were but now beginning. You know the demons who plot against you; you know how savage they are, and how powerless. Therefore fear them not. Let Christ be as the breath you breathe; in Him put your trust. Live as dying daily, heeding yourselves and remembering the counsels you have heard from me. And let there be no communion between you and the schismatics, nor the heretical Arians. For you know how I also have avoided them for their false and anti-Christian heresy. So do you also be earnest always to be in union first with the Lord and then with the saints, that after death they may also receive you into everlasting tabernacles as known friends. Ponder these things, and mean them. And if you have any care for me, and remember me as your father, do not allow anyone to take my body to Egypt, lest

they should deposit it in their houses; for that is the reason why I entered the mountains and came here. And you know how I have always reproached those who do this, and bade them stop the practice. Therefore care for my body yourselves, and bury it in the earth. And let my words be so observed by you, that no one shall know the place, but yourselves only. For in the resurrection from the dead I shall receive it back from the Savior incorruptible. Distribute my garments. The one sheepskin, give to Athanasius the bishop, and the cloak upon which I used to lie, which he gave me new, but it has worn out with me. The other sheepskin give to Serapion the bishop; and do you keep the hair-cloth garment. And now God save you, children; for Anthony departs and is with you no more.”

Having said this and been embraced by them, he drew up his feet. Then, gazing as it seemed on friends who had come for him, and filled by them with joy, for his countenance glowed as it laid, he died and was taken to his fathers. They, as he had given them orders, cared for his body and wrapped it up and buried it there in the earth. And no man yet knows where it is laid save only those two. And they who received the sheepskins of the blessed Anthony and the cloak that he wore out, each guard them as some great treasure. For to look on them is like looking on Anthony, and to wear them is like joyfully taking on us his teachings.

This is the end of Anthony’s life in the body, as that was the beginning of his religious life. And if this is but little to tell of virtue such as his, yet from this little do you judge what manner of man was Anthony the man of God, who from his youth to such great age held unchanged in his keen quest for a better life, who never for old age yielded to the desire for varied meats, nor for failing strength of body changed his form of dress nor even bathed his feet in water. And yet in all respects he was to the end untouched by decay. He saw well, with eyes sound and undimmed. Of his teeth he had lost not

a one, only they were worn near the gums, because of his great age. In feet and hands, too, he was quite healthy. Altogether, he seemed brighter and more active than all those who use rich diet and baths and many clothes.

That he was everywhere spoken of, and by all admired, and sought even by those who had not seen him — these things are proof of his virtue and of a soul dear to God. For Anthony was known not for his writings, nor for worldly wisdom, nor for any art, but simply for the service of God. That this is God’s gift none could deny. For how was he heard of even to Spain, and to Gaul, to Rome and to Africa, he sitting hidden in the hills, unless it were God Who everywhere makes known His own people, Who also in the beginning had announced this to Anthony? For though they themselves act in secret, and wish to be unnoticed, yet the Lord shows them as lanterns to all, that even from this the hearers may know that the commandments are able to be fulfilled, and so may take courage on the path of virtue.

Now, therefore, read this to the other brethren, that they may learn what should be the life of monks, and may believe that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ glorifies those who glorify Him, and not only brings to the kingdom of heaven those who serve Him to the end, but even here (though they hide themselves and seek retirement). He makes them everywhere known and spoken of for their own goodness and for the helping of others. And if need arise, read it also to the pagans, that perhaps thus they may learn not only that our Lord Jesus Christ is God and the Son of God, but also that through Him the Christians, who serve Him sincerely and who piously trust in Him, not only prove that the demons whom the Greeks think are no gods, but trample on them and drive them out as deceivers and corrupters of men, through Christ Jesus our Lord, to Whom is glory for ages of ages. Amen.

Justice (i.e., rectitude) does not belong to the Christian way of life and there is no mention of it in Christ’s teaching. Rejoice with the joyous and weep with those who weep; for this is the sign of limpid purity. Suffer with those who are ill and mourn with sinners; with those who repent, rejoice. Be every man’s friend, but in your mind remain alone. Rebuke no one, revile no one, not even men who live very wickedly. Spread your cloak over the man who is falling and cover him. [St. Isaac the Syrian, 7th cent.]

THE FORTY HOLY MARTYRS OF SEBASTE IN ARMENIA

WHOM THE HOLY CHURCH COMMEMORATES ON THE 9TH OF MARCH

During the reign of the impious emperor Licinius, merciless persecution of the Christians was reinstated,* and all believers were ordered to offer sacrifices to the idols. In the Armenian town of Sebaste at that time the commander of the forces was Agricola, a man of violent temper and a zealous champion of idolatry. As at that time there were already many Christians in the ranks of the imperial regiment, an edict was promulgated ordering that they, too, should sacrifice to the demons.

In Agricola's regiment there were forty soldiers from the province of Cappadocia who comprised a highly esteemed bodyguard, and who devoutly believed in Christ God and distinguished themselves by their unshakable courage, being always invincible in combat. Cyrian, Candidus and Domnus — all three well versed in the sacred Scriptures — were among them. When news reached Agricola that there were Christians in his bodyguard, he decided to compel them to worship the idols. Having summoned them to him, the commander addressed them thus:

"As when in combat with enemies you were always united amongst yourselves, being of one spirit and displaying such bravery, so even now with similar single-mindedness show obedience to the imperial decree in unity of spirit, with good will offering sacrifice to the gods so as not to inflict suffering upon yourselves."

To this the saints daringly answered: "If we, fighting manfully for the earthly king, always attained victory — as you, O accursed one, bear witness; then in struggling for the immortal King, shall we not the more overcome your malice and gain victory over your cunning?"

* Licinius, a relative by marriage of Constantine the Great, emperor of the western half of the Roman Empire, was emperor of the East from 308 to 323 AD. In 313 AD a decree was published by both emperors, announcing that the Christian religion was officially recognized as equal with the pagan. But Licinius, a pagan, rose up against Constantine, who firmly stood as a protector of Christianity, and prepared to make war against him. Deluded by an oracle who promised him victory, he decided to annihilate Christianity within the limits of his empire and especially, out of fear of treason, amid the troops.

Agricola said, "One of two alternatives stands before you — either offer sacrifice to the gods and earn great honors; or, in the event of your disobedience, but stripped of your military rank and fall into disgrace. Think on this and choose for yourselves what you find the more profitable."

"The Lord takes care of what is profitable for us," said the soldiers.

"Don't deliberate about it any more," answered the commander. "Give up your lies and in the morning be prepared to sacrifice to the gods."

So saying, Agricola gave orders that they be thrown into jail. Having been taken there, the holy soldiers, falling on their knees in prayer, cried out to God: "Deliver us, O Lord, from temptation and from being seduced by lawless people." In the evening they began to sing the Psalm, "He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High, who abides in the shadow of the Almighty..." [Ps 90].

Having sung the psalm through to the end, the holy warriors offered up their prayers to the Lord. After the prayer they again occupied themselves with psalmody and so went to sleep till about midnight. The director of the singing was the holy Cyrian. He proclaimed the verses, and saints Candidus and Domnus, with the others, repeated them after him. Then at midnight the holy ones heard the voice of the Lord, Who had revealed Himself to them: "Good is this beginning of your resolve, but he who endures to the end will be saved" [Matt 10:22]. They all heard this, the voice of the Lord, and were overcome with dread, but their fear was dissolved by an unearthly joy. They did not sleep till morning.

In the morning, Agricola, having gathered around him his friends and counselors, commanded that the holy forty soldiers be brought from the prison, and he addressed them with sly words: "What I tell you, I say not in flattery, nor yet in falsehood, but in very truth: our emperor has many soldiers, but none of them can equal you, neither in ingenuity nor in valor, nor yet in handsomeness, nor do they take such advantage of my disposition as do you. Do not then do that which

will change my love for you into hatred. It is in your hands and depends on you whether you bring upon yourselves my hatred.”

To this Saint Candidus replied: “You cruel flatterer — Agricola! (a compound of two Greek words meaning “savage” and “flatter”) — your name matches your temper.”

The commander repeated: “Didn’t I tell you that it is in your power — either safeguard my love, or provoke my hatred upon yourselves?”

And Saint Candidus said: “Seeing that your love or hatred for us depends, as you say yourself, on us, we choose your hatred; both do we hate you and also we look only to the mercy of our God. You, however, are a violent, merciless man and the enemy of our God. Do not love us, you who are lawless and jealous, enveloped in the darkness of delusion and in justifying your cruel name by your bestial disposition.”

The commander, brought to a frenzy by such a daring answer from the saint, gnashing his teeth like a lion, ordered that the holy warriors be thrown into chains and cast into jail. But the holy Cyrion said to him: “You do not have authority from the emperor to torture us, but can only interrogate us.”

Startled by such an explanation as was made by the holy soldier, Agricola ordered that they be taken away, but without rough handling, and put into prison. They were not to be fettered; he ordered only that the jailer keep a close watch over them. At that time the commander was awaiting the arrival of Licius, a prince who had great authority.

Remaining in jail, the saintly warriors spent day and night in prayer, in singing psalms and in listening to St. Cyrion’s teaching. Among other things he said, “By God’s ordinance, my brothers, in futile military service we made friends with each other in this temporary life. Let us endeavor not to separate even in eternity. Just as up to the present we have lived in unity of spirit and thought, even so let us accomplish the spiritual feat of martyrdom together. Just as we were pleasing to a mortal king, so let us strive to be worthy of the favor of the immortal King, Christ our God.”

When a week had passed, during which time the warriors were held in prison, the prince Licius came to that country. During his stay at Sebaste, he

quickly turned his attention to the valiant soldiers. Then on the following day, seated together with Agricola on the tribunal, he commanded that the holy forty be brought for interrogation.

On the way to this unjust tribunal, the blessed Cyrion admonished his fellows thus: “Have no fear, brothers, for did not God help us in combat, when we called upon Him and conquered our enemies? Remember how once it happened that we took part in a great battle. When all our companions in arms in the regiment took flight, we forty remained amidst the enemies alone. We raised our tearful prayer to God and with His help alone we overcame — dispersed the wounded, and with such a multitude of enemies and in all the ferocity of the battle not a one of us was wounded. Now, three foes are arrayed against us — satan, Licinius, and the commander Agricola; or, better to say, one enemy rises in battle against us — the invisible enemy. Do you want him to triumph over this our bodyguard of forty? May it not be so! Now we must act as we have always acted, resorting to fervent prayer to God — and He will help us. Neither fetters nor torment will cause us any harm. It has always been a rule with us that, entering into a struggle, we sing the psalm ‘Save me, O God, by Thy name, and vindicate me by Thy might. Hear my prayer, O God; give ear to the words of my mouth’ [Ps 53]. Brethren, fellow-fighters, let us do this now as well, and God will hear us and help us.”

So the holy ones sang this psalm all the way from the prison to the tribunal. The people of the town gathered to see the spectacle. The bodyguard of forty stood accused before Licius and Agricola. Prince Licius glanced at the holy soldiers and said, “I think that these men want and deserve high honors.” Then he spoke to them: “You will receive both distinctions and gifts from me, if only you submit to the imperial decree and sacrifice to the gods. To secure your freedom, choose one of the two. Either bow to the gods and earn great rewards and honors; or, in the event of your refusal to fulfill this request, then be stripped of military rank and subject yourselves to suffering.”

To this St. Candidus answered: “Take from us not only our military rank, but our very bodies; for nothing is more dear or honorable than Christ our God.”

Then the haughty prince commanded that they beat the saints with stones on their mouths, but holy Candidus only remarked: "Prince of darkness and preserver of lawlessness! You yourself begin to do this and you will witness vengeance."

Boiling with anger and gnashing his teeth, the commander said, "Evil slaves! You take so long to fulfill the prince's command!"

The slaves took up stones, but when they began to throw them, their blows did not harm the saints, but rather returned upon themselves, and they struck each other down. Seeing this, the holy martyrs were even more strengthened in their boldness for the Lord. The irritable prince himself seized a stone and threw it at once of the saints, but the stone hit Agricola in the face and smashed into his mouth.

Then St. Cyrion said, "Struggling with us our enemies have become weak and are humiliated; in truth their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken" [Ps 36:15].

The wounded commander cried out, "I swear by the gods, some magical power helps them!" But St. Domnus replied: "In the name of Christ, I testify that it is not magic, but God Who helps us, and this power covers with ignominy your shameless face which proclaims lies about His Son. Is it not shameful to you, O mindless one, O diabolical stranger to truth, fulfilling the darkness of hades, O sower of temptations? You, Agricola, are the head of the devil's evilness and the prince with you is the tail of his raging — both of you, slaves of satan. If you still have not believed in the presence with us of God's power in this the beginning of our suffering, to which you have subjected us, then try another torture."

Amongst the slaves there were some who wanted to defend their humiliated superiors. "De-luded enemies of our gods," they said to the holy martyrs, "why don't you want to sacrifice to them?"

St. Cyrion answered them: "We revere one God and Jesus Christ His Son and the Holy Spirit, and we are striving daringly to accomplish our spiritual feat so that, having overcome your flattery, we may receive the crowns of eternal life."

Once again Licius commanded that the holy combatants be led away to jail, so that he could consider how to treat them. Confined in the prison, they occupied themselves with psalmody: "To Thee

we lift up our eyes," they sang, "O Thou Who art enthroned in the heavens! Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master... so our eyes look to the Lord our God, till He have mercy on us" [Ps 122:1-2]. And after prayers they were for a second time granted encouragement from on high. At the sixth hour of the night they heard the voice of the Lord revealed to them: "He who believes in Me, though he die, yet shall he live [Jn 11:25]. Be bold and have no fear of short-lived torment, which soon passes. Endure a little; stand guard according to the law, that you may receive crowns."

Strengthened by this comfort from Christ God, the holy soldiers spent that night in spiritual rejoicing. On the next day they were again brought up to the dishonorable judges and again, without hesitating, they announced: "Do what you will with us. We are Christians and cannot agree to bow down before the idols."

At this time there was seen at Agricola's side the devil, in the appearance of a man holding a sword and in his left a snake, whispering to the commander: "You are mine — get on with it!"

The torturer ordered them to bind the forty holy soldiers and drag them to the large lake which was situated near the town of Sebaste. It was then wintertime and a strong wind was blowing. At the same time there was a heavy frost; evening was already approaching. The holy ones were exposed naked in the middle of the lake all through the night. A guard under the command of the warden of the prison was appointed to watch over them. In order to tempt the holy combatants, warm baths were set up near the lake, luring those of the bodyguard of forty condemned to endure the cruel cold, and promising speedy aid to whoever, enfeebled by the frost, would yield to idolatry and want to warm himself by fleeing from the water.

In the first hour of the night, when the cold reached its extreme cruelty, so that the bodies of the saints froze, one of the forty could not keep up the spiritual feat. Separating from the choir of the saints, he hastened to the bath. But scarcely had he gotten to the brim of the bath, hardly had he felt the warmth, than he thawed out and died. Seeing such a shameless flight, the holy strugglers, in spiritual union, sang out to God:

“Was Thy wrath against the rivers, O Lord? Was Thy anger against the rivers, or Thine indignation against the sea? [Hab 3:5]. He who has separated from us is spilled out like water and his bones are crumbled to dust. [cf. Ps 21:14]. Then we will never turn back from Thee; give us life and we will call upon Thy name [Ps 79:18]. Thou, Whom all creation praises, to Whom sea monsters and all deeps, fire and hail, snow and fog, and stormy wind give praise [cf. Ps 148:7-8], and Who walked on the sea as on dry land [cf. Matt 14:25] and didst still the raging waves by a wave of Thy hand [cf. Lk 8:24]; Thou, O Lord, art even now the same — Thou Who didst give heed to Jacob’s prayer as he fled from the threats of his brother Esau [cf. Gen 27-28], Who didst deliver him from adversity [cf. Gen 39 onwards], Who didst hearken unto Moses and didst grant him the power to perform signs and wonders in Egypt before Pharaoh and his court [Ex 7-11], Who didst divide the sea and lead Thy people in the wilderness [Ex 14]; Who didst, by the prayer of Thy holy apostles, stretch forth Thy hand granting healing and working signs and miracles in the name of Thy holy Son Jesus [Acts 4:23-31; 16:25-26] — Do Thou, O Lord, hear even us. May the watery abyss not destroy us, and may the deep not swallow us, for we have become very poor. Help us, O God our Savior, for here we stand in the water and our feet are stained with our blood. Ease the burden of our oppression and tame the cruelty of the air. O Lord our God! — on Thee do we hope; let us not be ashamed, but let all understand that we, who call upon Thee, have been saved!”

During the third hour of the night, a light like the summer sun at harvest time bathed the holy martyrs in splendor. It dispersed the cold, melted the ice, and warmed the water. In the meanwhile, the soldiers who were employed to keep guard over the saints were overcome by sleep — only one prison guard did not sleep. He, hearing that the martyrs prayed to God, thought to himself, What could this mean? He who had fled to the bath had melted like wax from the heat; but the others, remaining in such extreme cold, were living and unharmed. Struck by the light illuminating the holy martyrs, and wanting to observe whence came this wondrous light, he glanced upward and saw

thirty-nine radiant crowns, descending onto the heads of the saints. Wondering why there were not forty crowns, in accordance with the suffering number of forty men, he realized that he who had fled to the bath had been excluded from the choir of the saints, and for this reason did not attain the fortieth crown. Quickly, he roused the sleeping soldiers, threw off his clothes and, before the eyes of all, ran naked into the lake, exclaiming, “I, too, am a Christian!”

Joining the assembly of the holy martyrs, he cried out to God: “O Lord God, I believe in Thee, in Whom they also believe. Accept me into their number and grant me to suffer with Thy servants. As a result of the spiritual feat of this trial, may I prove worthy of Thee.” In this way, the number of the martyrs was restored to forty.* The prison guard, who stood a holy fulfillment of their number, replaced the apostate. His name was Aglaius.

At such a marvelous completion of the choir of forty holy martyrs, the devil, seeing himself conquered and humiliated, appeared in the form of a man, and sobbed and appealed to all listeners: “Woe is me! I am defeated by these men. Before everyone I am slandered and made a laughing-stock. It turns out that I had neither friends nor like-minded slaves to fight for my victory. What remains for me to do? Nothing more, but only to turn to the hearts of my devoted prince and the commander — to inspire them to burn the saints’ bodies and throw their ashes into the river, so that afterwards nothing will remain; there will be no relics of any sort.”

In the meanwhile, St. Cyrion sang out: “What god is great like our God? Thou art the God Who

* The number 40 was always regarded as remarkable and holy. For 40 days and nights rain fell in Noah’s time and cleansed the earth of the predeluvian fleshly people [Gen 7:12]. For 40 years the Jews wandered in the wilderness, and only then did they reach the promised land [Josh 5:6]. For 40 days and nights Moses stayed on Sinai and received the tablets of the law [Ex 34:28]. On the fortieth day after a birth, the first-born of the Jews was dedicated to God [Lev 12:2-4]. In 40 days and nights the prophet Elijah went to Mount Horeb and was found worthy of a vision of the Lord in the blowing of a gentle breeze [III Kgs 19:8]. For 40 days and nights our Lord Jesus Christ Himself fasted in the desert [Matt 4:2]. For 40 days He remained on the earth after His resurrection, appearing to His disciples and talking about the Kingdom of God [Acts 1:3].

workest wonders! [Ps 76:13-14]. Thou, O Master, didst make those who were against us to stand with us and for us. Thou hast replenished our depleted number and hast humiliated satan!" And all the martyrs began to sing the psalm, "Help, Lord; for there is no longer any that is godly" [Ps 11].

When morning dawned, the dishonorable judges came to the lake and, seeing the holy martyrs standing in the water, living and unharmed by the winter cold, they marveled, but explained this wonderful manifestation as being due to the magical cunning of the passion-bearers. Their wonder was increased when they questioned the soldiers who stood on guard: why and how did this happen?

The soldiers answered: "In the night we fell into a deep sleep, but he — that is, the prison-guard — did not sleep all night, and suddenly he woke us up. Having awakened, we saw a great light illuminating those standing in the water. This fellow quickly stripped off his clothes, threw them down, and impetuously dived into the water and joined those there, loudly declaring, 'I too am a Christian.'"

The hearts of the tormenters then waxed violent, and they commanded that the bound saints be dragged to the shore, and taken from there to the torture-chambers in the town. The judge sentenced the holy martyrs to be subjected to new tortures — by crushing their legs with sledge-hammers.

When this inhuman torturing of the saints took place, the pious mother of one of the youngest of them, Meliton, approached the place of their suffering and, standing beside the sufferers, she encouraged them by her words to discharge their undertaking bravely. Taking even greater heed lest her young son should become fearful and weak in his sufferings, she looked upon him lovingly and, stretching forth her hands to him, encouraged and comforted him, saying: "My sweetest son! Bear a little more and you will accomplish. Have no fear, child; Christ stands before you to help you!"

The holy martyrs, like despised animals, subjected to fearful torments from their broken legs [cf. Jn 19:31], but unwaning in their zeal, to their last breath sang out joyfully: "We have escaped as a bird from the snare of the fowlers; the snare is broken and we have escaped. Our help is in the name of the Lord Who made heaven and earth" [Ps 123:7-8].

And, pronouncing the "Amen", they all gave up their souls to God. Only one, Meliton, comforted by his mother, remained alive, though scarcely breathing. After this, the torturers commanded their slaves to load the bodies of the departed saints into a cart and take them to be burned, leaving only young Meliton in the hope that he might live. But his devout mother, seeing that her son was left alone in the place of torture, ignoring her nature and feminine frailty and mustering her courage, took her son over her shoulder and fearlessly followed the cart, on which the martyrs were being carried like sheaves of ripe wheat.

When the martyr, carried by his mother and rejoicing in the Lord, gave up his soul, then with her motherly hands she laid his body on the cart with his fellow athletes. When the saints' bodies arrived at the place of cremation near the river, in accordance with the orders of the dishonorable judges, the soldiers collected a quantity of wood and brushwood and prepared a huge funeral pyre. Throwing the saints' bodies onto it, they set it afire. The funeral pyre burned out, leaving only the martyrs' bones. But the malice of the torturers was not appeased.

"If we leave the bones thus," they reasoned amongst themselves, "then the Christians will collect them and fill the whole world with them, breaking them into pieces and saving them in remembrance of them. So throw them into the river, so that not even their ashes will remain."

The remains of the holy relics were thrown into the river, in order that the memory of the valiant passion-bearers might be destroyed for all time. But the Lord, Who keeps all the bones of those who please Him, did not permit even one small part of them to be destroyed in the water; rather, they were all saved in their entirety.

After three days had passed, the holy martyrs appeared to the blessed Peter, the bishop of Sebaste, and told him: "Go by night and recover us from the river."

The blessed bishop summoned some venerable members of his clergy and went with them to river bank in the deep of night. There, before their very eyes, a wondrous sight appeared: the bones of the saints were shining like stars in the waters; even the smallest fragments were clearly visible where they

lay in the water. Having collected all the bones to the very last one, the bishop placed them in an honored place.

Thus, having suffered for Christ and been crowned by Him, they shine as luminaries in the world. They believed in God; they confessed Christ; they did not resist the Holy Spirit, and they received praise from the Holy and Life-giving Trinity. The memory of their spiritual feat remained, so as to be told for the edification unto salvation of all who believe in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

The names of the holy forty martyrs were: Cyrion, Candidus, Domnus, Hesychius, Heraclius, Smaragdus, Eunoicus, Valens,

Vivianus, Claudius, Priscus, Theodulus, Eutyches, John, Xanthus, Elianus, Sisenius, Angus, Ætius, Flavius, Acacius, Ecdicius, Lysimachus, Alexander, Elias, Gorgonius, Theophilus, Dometian, Gaius, Leontius, Athanasius, Cyril, Sacerdon, Nicholas, Valerian, Philoctemon, Severian, Chudion, Meliton, and Aglaius.

The holy forty martyrs were taken to suffer for Christ on the twenty-sixth of February, and gave up their souls to the Lord on the ninth of March, when the pagan Licinius still ruled the empire — or, better to say, when our Lord Jesus Christ already reigned. For to Him is the glory, the honor and worship, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, unto the ages. Amen.

Adapted from the account published in *Orthodox Life* (Jordanville, NY), 1971 #2

Please don't forget...

All the media attention is pretty much gone, but the harsh reality remains, for the whole country and for your Orthodox brothers and sisters in Haiti. Classes at St. Augustine's are still in the open and in tents. Work on the new building (the pouring of the floor and the columns for the walls has been completed) unfortunately had to be suspended for a time, but is now again underway, despite constantly escalating materials costs. God willing, we'll have secure classroom space for at least a portion of the students before the beginning of the next school year. Repairs for the church, while needed, are less urgent and will have to wait. And then there's the task of repairing and reinforcing the original school building to good earthquake standards...

Fortunately, St. Nicholas School is in better stead, with a roof which permits classes to continue

even in fairly heavy rains. I won't know the current situation of St. John Chrysostom till I get there shortly (late June); it was in temporary quarters during my last visit.

Coming, this visit, the patronal feast at St. Augustine's, always a joyous occasion.



☐ Yes... I want to pledge support for the Haitian Orthodox Mission! Please record my pledge through December 2011 for a contribution of ☐ \$200 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$50 ☐ other amount (_____) monthly, by ☐ check or ☐ MasterCard/VISA (number below). I enclose my first month's pledge for _____. (You may of course choose a dedicated use below if you wish.)

☐ Yes... I want to make a one-time contribution toward the expenses of the Haitian Orthodox Mission, in the amount of ☐ \$1000 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$100 ☐ other amount (_____), for which I enclose my ☐ check ☐ MasterCard/VISA (number below). I would like my contribution to be used for ☐ support of the church-related schools ☐ assistance to earthquake victims ☐ transportation funds for faithful living at long distances from the church ☐ assistance for Food for Hungry Children ☐ however needed.

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1180 Orthodox Way
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775-377-4610
fax 615-536-5945

www.haitianorthodoxmission.org
frgregory@sjkp.org